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As to *writing* English, the thought never entered Boki's mind. He never learned to *read* it; and such parts of sentences as, 'trying everything in his power to have the law of this country in his own hands,'—'nothing done in these islands, not even cultivation for their own use;'—'no redemption for any of the heads of the English or American nations,'—would be utterly beyond his comprehension, if written by another.

It is highly probable, that the letter was signed by Boki, a specious account having been given him of its contents. There are strong reasons for thinking, that it was antedated six or eight months, in order to render the imposition more effectual.

If such a forgery were committed merely as a matter of sport, without any malicious intention, it would be extremely reprehensible; but what act can be more dishonorable or wicked, than to make a deliberate fabrication the vehicle of false charges, the object and tendency of which are to prejudice the world against the exertions of men, who have made no ordinary sacrifices in devoting their lives to a most arduous task, and thus materially to impede a work, upon which the moral and intellectual progress, the present and future happiness, of many tribes and nations are depending?

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ART. IV.—*Select Specimens of the Theatre of the Hindus*; No. I, THE MRICHCHAKATI, or THE TOY CART; a Drama. No. II, VIKRAMA AND URVASI, or THE HERO AND THE NYMPH; a Drama. Translated from the original Sanscrit by HORACE HAYMAN WILSON, Secretary to the Asiatic Society of Bengal. 8vo. pp. 204 and 105. Calcutta, 1826.

MR WILSON appears, either by way of Introduction to these Specimens, or in some separate work, to have written *A General View of the Hindu Dramatic System*, principally derived from the *Das'a Rūpaka*, which we take to be a Sanscrit work on the same subject. This 'General View' we have not had the advantage of seeing, and are consequently obliged to review these translations, without the light it would no doubt have afforded us.

The knowledge of the Sanscrit drama was first imparted to the nations of Europe, by Sir William Jones. Before his arrival in India, it was not known that the Hindu literature was enriched with that species of composition. Sir William informs us, in the preface to *Sacotalá*,\* that his attention was first called to the subject, by a passage in the *Lettres Edifiantes*, to the following effect ;—‘ that in the north of India, there are many books called *Nátac*, which, as the Brahmins assert, contain a large portion of ancient history, without any mixture of fable.’ It was some time before Sir William could find out what the nature of these *Nátacs* was. ‘ At length,’ says he, ‘ a very sensible Brahmin, named Rádhácánt, who had long been attentive to English manners, removed all my doubts, and gave me no less delight than surprise, by telling me that our nation had compositions of the same sort, which were publicly represented at Calcutta, in the cold season, and bore the name, as he had been informed, of *plays*.’

Sir William Jones expresses the opinion, that dramatic literature must have been extremely ancient in the Indian empire, inasmuch as the invention of it is usually ascribed to Bharat, ‘ a sage believed to have been inspired.’ The name, by which India is called by the natives of that country, *Bharata-vashta*, would seem, in fact, to indicate a connexion between this inspired dramatist, and the very *incunabula* of the Hindu people. Sir William, however, considerably adds, that this opinion of the origin of the Hindu drama is rendered very doubtful, by the universal belief, that the first Sanscrit verse ever heard by mortals, was pronounced, in a burst of resentment, by the great Válmic, who flourished in the silver (antediluvian) age of the world. He adds also, in additional derogation from the claims of Bharat, as the inventor of the Indian drama, the following ‘ wild story,’ as he calls it, of the production of the first regular Sanscrit play. It was composed by Hanumat or Pávan (a singular *alias*) ‘ who commanded an army of Satyrs, or Mountaineers, in Ráma’s expedition against Lancá. It is added, that he engraved it on a smooth rock, which (being dissatisfied with his composition) he hurled into the sea ; and that, many years after, a learned prince ordered expert divers to take impressions of the poem on wax, by which means the drama was in a great measure restored.’—‘ My

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\* Sir William Jones’s Works, VI. 203. Quarto edition.

pandit,' continues Sir William Jones, 'assures me, that he is in possession of it.' Considering its history, one might look in honest Hanumat's play, for some specimens of the bathos.

The publication before us contains the translation of two Sanscrit plays, which, with the 'Sacontalá' of Cálidása, already translated by Sir William Jones, are the only entire specimens, we believe, of the Hindu theatre, which are before the public. Of these two plays, the second, *Vikrama and Urvasí*, is also the production of Calidasa, 'the Shakespeare of India;' but as *The Mrichchakati*, or *The Toy Cart*, is contained in the first number, and is the performance of a poet not hitherto introduced to the western world, we shall make it the first subject of remark.

The introduction of *The Toy Cart* itself ascribes the composition to a royal bard, Sudraka by name. The first question that arises then, in order to ascertain the age of this drama is, when did his sacred majesty Sudraka reign. As the solution of this question presents a pretty good specimen of the manner, in which points of Hindu, and we may add, Chinese antiquity, are sometimes settled, we shall enter a little more particularly into it.

Although 'the name of Sudraka,' we are told, 'is very celebrated in Hindu history,' yet it is a matter of controversy, whether he lived one hundred years before, or one thousand years after, the christian era! It seems to be admitted, that he preceded Vicramáditya (we use Sir William Jones's orthography, Dow and Polier read it Bickermagit\*), but whether it be the Vicramaditya, who died fifty-six years before our Savior, and whose death is the beginning of an era in India, or another king of the same name, who flourished in the eleventh century of the christian era, is questioned.

Colonel Wilford, however, is satisfied with neither date, and assigns another of his own, to the royal dramatist, to whom we are indebted for *The Toy Cart*, namely, the year of our Savior 192. Colonel Wilford's deduction of this date deserves quoting as a chronological curiosity. It is almost as good as Lord Shaftesbury's descent from king Pepin. It is as follows. Puliman, the last king of Magadha, of the Andhra dynasty, died A. D. 648, and *is said* to have reigned 456 years after the first king of the same dynasty, who must

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\* Heeren's Ideen. Th. I. Abth. II. s. 407.

accordingly have flourished A. D. 192. Now *it is said*, that in one of the very ancient religious books of the Hindus, there is this *prophecy*; that in the year of the *Kali* 3,300 minus 10, a great king (it appears not where) would reign, named *Sudraka*. The year of the *Kali* 3292, is A. D. 192; hence *Sudraka* is the king already alluded to, as the first king of Magadha of the Andhra race. It is true, this founder of the Andhra dynasty is, in the Hindu *histories*, called by a totally different name; but then as the Hindu prophecies *foretold*, that *Sudraka* would reign about the same time, there is no doubt, according to Colonel Wilford, that we possess, in *The Toy Cart*, a play in ten acts, really written by the individual, who deposed the last sovereign of the Kanwa family, and reigned over Magadha in his stead.

It is with some concern, after we have thus been at the trouble of fixing his majesty's era, that we are informed by Mr Wilson that there is 'but one prince so named, *of any note*, in the annals of the Hindus.' That it was written by *the* one, who is so remarkably notorious, as to have the period of his reign unsettled, by about eleven centuries, does not appear.

The only additional fact communicated with respect to the author of this piece, is the duration of his reign, which extended, *it is said*, to one hundred years, and which terminated by what is courteously styled 'voluntary cremation.' In plainer phrase, it appears that his majesty, soon perplexed with the cares of empire, after reigning but a single century, burned himself to death; a striking instance of want of ambition! There are few of his majesty's predecessors of that age of the world in India, who did not cling to their sceptres, their three and four hundred years. Our royal bard, at the close of a poor century, takes himself off; not indeed 'throwing a firebrand into the Magadha empire,' but lying down peaceably upon his own funeral pyre.

But it is time to pass from the king himself to the burning words of his tragedy. After a solemn benediction in the name of Seeva, the manager enters on the stage, and apprizes the audience, that his company are prepared to enact the drama entitled *The Toy Cart*. This name arises from an incident in the play, to which we shall allude in its place. He informs the audience, that 'there was a poet, whose gait was that of an elephant, whose eyes resembled those of the partridge, whose countenance was like the full moon, who was of stately per-

sori, amiable manners, and profound veracity, well versed in the *Rig* and *Sāma Vēdas*, in mathematical sciences, in the elegant arts, and the management of elephants.' After this glowing description of the author of the play, the manager proceeds in part to open its plot to the audience.

In Avanti (the modern Ougein, the capital of Scindiah) lived a young Brahman of distinguished rank and excellent character, but reduced to poverty; his name was *Charudatta*. A lady (sustaining the same relation to society in Avanti, that *Aspasia* did in Athens), *Vasantasēnā* by name, becomes enamored of *Charudatta*, and, although the worthy Brahman already enjoys the blessing of a faithful and virtuous wife, the business of the play is to effect an additional union (which the manners of India permit) between *Vasantasena* and *Charudatta*.

After hinting at this plot, the manager enters into a dialogue with one of the actresses, and subsequently with one of the characters of the piece, *in propria personā*, and then goes off. By way of illustrating the dramatic taste of the Hindus, it may be observed, that the greater part of the prelude has no possible connexion with the play; not even *such* a connexion, as that which the 'Induction,' that precedes the 'Taming of the Shrew,' has to the body of that comedy.

The play opens with a dialogue between the impoverished Brahman, *Charudatta*, and his friend *Maitreya*, the *Gracioso*, or, as the Hindu criticism styles it, the *Vidūshaka* of the piece, a character of mixed shrewdness and simplicity, with an affectionate disposition. *Charudatta*, while engaged in the performance of the evening sacrifice, falls into a lamentation with *Maitreya* on the evils of poverty. They are interrupted by the sound of pursuing voices, and *Vasantasena* the beautiful, wealthy, and virtuous courtesan, the heroine of the piece, rushes upon the scene, in front of *Charudatta's* house, followed by *Samst'hānaka* (the brother-in-law of the Rajah, an ignorant, frivolous, and cruel coxcomb), who, enamored of *Vasantasena*, and attended by his tutor, a Parasite (the *Vita* of the Hindu stage), and a servant, are pursuing her through the streets. This lady, having seen *Charudatta*, in the court of a temple, had conceived a strong attachment for him, of which, however, *Charudatta* himself was ignorant; as was *Vasantasena* that she had been pursued to the door of the man, who had inspired her with the tender passion. In the dialogue, which takes place between *Vasantasena* and her

pursuers, the former incidentally learns, that she is in front of Charudatta's dwelling ; and, as it is now the dusk of the evening, she immediately escapes into it, thus eluding their pursuit. To account to Charudatta for this visit, and at the same time to ensure a farther intercourse, Vasantasena tells him, that she has been pursued by robbers, for the sake of her jewels, which she accordingly begs him to accept, for safe keeping ; and then to conduct her home. This Charudatta accordingly does, but not till he had learned (in a scene with the pursuers without the door), what before he was ignorant of, that he was the object of Vasantasena's affections. The first act closes with Charudatta's return from conducting Vasantasena home.

The second act opens with a scene curiously illustrating the Hindu manners. A *Samvâhaka* (or joint-kneader) an important personage in the bathing establishments of the East, having lost at play ten *suvernas*, which he cannot pay, escapes by flight from the gaming house, pursued by the master of the house and the gamester to whom he had lost the money. To elude their pursuit, he walks *backwards*, like Cacus, into an open temple, and places himself on a pedestal, as the deity of the temple. The pursuers enter, and immediately recognise him. Not daring, however, to force him from the sanctuary, they shake and pinch him, affecting to think him an image of wood or stone. This scene doubtless gave no little scope for the practical wit of the Hindu stage. In order to lure the Samvahaka from his stand, the gamesters sit down on the floor, and begin to throw their dice for a stake. The poor Samvahaka, like a warhorse who hears the trumpet, unable to resist the tempting sound of the dice, proves too soon, that he had not yet 'forgot himself to marble,' and leaps from his pedestal, to watch the progress of the game. He falls of course into the hands of his merciless creditors, and being unable to acquit his debt to them, is carried off to be sold to slavery ; the Hindu form of *mesne* process. While they are carrying him off for this purpose, another gamester, *Darduraka*, comes in ; takes pity on the sad plight of the Samvahaka ; picks a quarrel with his creditors ; and in the *mêlée*, gives the Samvahaka a chance to escape for his life ; which he does to the house of Vasantasena, near which these occurrences take place.

Having entered the house and the presence of this lady,

and having received her promise of protection, never denied to a suppliant in the East, the Samvahaka effectually secures to himself the favor of Vasantasena, by disclosing the fact, that he had been in the service of Charudatta, before the decline of this person's fortunes. The love, which the lady bears to Charudatta, makes her eager to be useful to the Samvahaka, his former servant; and hearing, without doors, the clamors of his pursuers, she sends a jewel to them, in the name of the Samvahaka, and in acquittance of his debt. Disgusted with the occurrences, which had befallen him at the gaming table, the Samvahaka avows his determination to abandon the worldly life he had hitherto led, and become a mendicant, or wandering devotee of the faith of Budha,—a faith not as yet proscribed in Hindustan.

At the commencement of the third act, Charudatta and his friend Maitreya are represented as returning from a concert, the former in ecstasies at the voice of a skilful singer *Rebhika*; while Maitreya expresses himself in a manner calculated to lead one to suppose, there was the same difference among men, as to the taste for music, under king Sudraka, three or four thousand years ago, that there is in this transatlantic republic at the present day;

‘Now for me,’ says this surly censor, ‘there are two things, at which I cannot but laugh; a woman reading Sanscrit, and a man singing a song. The woman snuffles, like a young cow, when the rope is first put into her nostrils; and the man wheezes, like an old Pundit, who has been repeating his bead roll, till the flowers of his chaplet are as dry as his throat. To my seeming it is vastly ridiculous.’

After something more in this strain, and after Charudatta has particularly entrusted Maitreya with the charge of Vasantasena's casket of jewels, the two Brahmans drop asleep. While they are asleep, a dissipated blade, named *Servillaka*, breaks in upon the scene, on a burglarious errand, and adroitly plunders the sleeping Maitreya of the casket of jewels; which he designs as a present for *Madaniká*, the handmaiden of Vasantasena, with whom he is in love, and whose freedom he hopes to purchase with this treasure. A servant soon enters, who, discovering the robbery, awakens her master and his friend. Charudatta is of course dismayed at the loss of the rich casket, which he had received as a pledge, and which, in consequence of his poverty, he fears it will be thought he has him-



self secreted. The servant carries back to her mistress, the wife of Charudatta, the tale of her master's sorrow, at the loss of the casket ; and this excellent lady immediately determines to give up to her husband a string of diamonds, the last remnant of her bridal treasures, to enable him therewith to make some compensation to Vasantasena, for the loss of her jewels. With this string of diamonds, accordingly, Maitreya is sent, in the name of Charudatta, to the house of Vasantasena, with the message, that Charudatta, having rashly engaged in play and lost the casket at the gaming table, was now desirous of making compensation with a string of jewels.

Meantime, however, and before this errand is performed, Servillaka, the *innamorato* of Vasantasena's handmaiden, having, as we have seen, stolen the casket, comes and presents it to the said maiden, Madanika, in order that with it she may purchase her freedom of her mistress Vasantasena. On his acquainting Madanika with the manner of acquiring the casket, the latter, immediately recognising it as the property of her mistress, confided to Charudatta, easily convinces Servillaka of the necessity of returning it, either to her lady or Charudatta ; and between them they devise the plan, that Servillaka should pretend to be a messenger sent by Charudatta to restore it to her. While this little device is arranging, Vasantasena, unknown to the lovers, overhears it all, from the upper part of the room. Thus let into the secret, Vasantasena approaches, and with all imaginable gravity receives the casket from Servillaka ; and having informed him that it was agreed between her and Charudatta, that whenever the casket was returned, the messenger, who brought it, should receive Madanika for his pains, she bestows the maiden on Servillaka. The lovers, from this act of generosity, perceive that Vasantasena was, they know not how, in possession of their little secret, and aware of their fidelity to her in restoring the jewels.

In this part of the play, the underplot is first brought into notice. The king, *Pālaka*, is universally detested as a tyrant, and is particularly odious to the Brahmans. A prophecy is current that *Aryaka*, the son of a cowherd, shall ascend the throne in his place ; and alarmed by this prophecy, the king sends out to apprehend Aryaka and his followers, and cast them into prison. Among these followers are the gamester Darduraka (whom we mentioned above, as having interfered in behalf of the Samvahaka), and also Servillaka. Servillaka has no soon-

er received Madanika from Vasantasena's hand, than the public crier comes round, proclaiming that Aryaka is in prison. Servillaka determines to go and rouse his friends, to relieve him, and meantime sends his newly acquired mistress, for safety, to the house of the aforesaid Rebhila, the singer.

By this time, Maitreya, the friend of Charudatta, arrives at Vasantasena's house, to bring the string of diamonds, in compensation for the supposed lost casket. Here an extraordinary scene is set forth, and one which, if the resources of the Hindu scene-painters are on a level with the poet's genius, must have been in representation truly splendid. Maitreya is taken through eight successive courts, composing the house of Vasantasena ; and pausing in each, the servant who guides him, and Maitreya, describe in dialogue, the various parts of the domestic economy, display, and furniture, connected with each court. They at last get access to the lady herself, the mistress of all this magnificence. She takes the jewels from Maitreya, not betraying to him, that she has already received back her casket ; and informs Maitreya, that she shall visit his friend in the evening. Maitreya, who is somewhat misanthropic, conceives that the object of this visit is to extort from Charudatta some further compensation for the casket.

We have now reached the fifth act ; but a Hindu play is not so soon disposed of. The visit of Vasantasena, promised in the last act, now takes place, in spite of an impending storm. Imitating the fabricated message, which Charudatta had sent her, relative to the loss of the casket, she tells him, that having staked the necklace he had sent her, at play, and lost it, she had come to make him compensation ; and presents him the aforesaid casket of jewels. Charudatta then learns how she became possessed of it ; and the storm having meantime increased, Vasantasena yields to Charudatta's invitation, that she would pass the night at his house.

The next act represents Vasantasena preparing to proceed, in Charudatta's litter, to the public flower garden, *Pushpakaranda*, whither Charudatta has already repaired. Before leaving the house, Vasantasena sees the child of Charudatta, drawing his earthen *toy cart*, and weeping for a golden one, such as he had seen in the possession of a playmate, the child of a rich landholder. Vasantasena takes off her jewels, and putting them into the child's earthen cart, bids his nurse take him to buy a golden cart, from the sale of the jewels. This

incident has an important connexion with the catastrophe of the piece, and gives it the name of *The Toy Cart*.

While Vasantasena is getting ready to repair in Charudatta's litter to the public flower garden, the litter of her old but detested suitor, Samst'hanaka, the Rajah's brother-in-law, passes by, on his way to the same spot. The driver leaves the carriage for a moment on the stage, to go and assist a peasant, whose wagon he had forced into a slough. While he is off the stage, Vasantasena hastily enters, mistakes the litter of the Rajah's brother-in-law, for that of Charudatta, which she supposed to be in attendance, gets into it, and draws the curtain. The driver, *St'havaraka*, now returns, and not knowing that Vasantasena is in the vehicle, drives on to the flower garden.

At this juncture, Aryaka, the aspirer to the throne, having escaped from prison, by the aid of Servillaka, whom we left engaging in his relief, appears upon the stage, followed by officers in pursuit at a distance. Charudatta's litter at this moment, designed to take Vasantasena to the flower garden, comes in; and Aryaka adroitly enters it, undistinguished by the driver, who believes it to be the lady that enters, and thus drives off to the flower garden, with the fugitive state-prisoner and pretender to the throne, concealed in the vehicle.

On the way to the garden, the vehicle is arrested by two captains of the guard, one of whom, however, *Chandanaka*, is friendly to Aryaka's cause. Chandanaka undertakes to search the litter, and reports to *Viraka*, his comrade, that it contains the lady Vasantasena. His comrade, however, who is hostile to the cause of Aryaka, has his suspicions awakened, and insists upon searching the litter himself. This Chandanaka will not let him do, and an affray takes place between them, in which Viraka being worsted, flies to the palace to denounce Chandanaka. After he is gone, the latter gives Aryaka a sword; and Aryaka drives off, promising friendship and protection to Chandanaka, in the event of his own success. Chandanaka retires to collect his friends and relatives, in order to go to court, to meet the accusation of Viraka.

The seventh act introduces Charudatta and his friend Maitreya, arrived at the flower garden, and anxiously awaiting the approach of Vasantasena. Charudatta's carriage arrives, and Maitreya going to assist the lady in alighting, finds, to his astonishment, that it contains not the lady, but the fugitive Aryaka. He implores the protection of Charudatta, who

(bound by duty to a suppliant) accords it, and removes the fetters from Aryaka's feet. By this action, of course, he lays Aryaka under infinite obligations. Deeming it, however, unsafe, after such a transaction, to remain on the spot, he gives up the appointment to meet Vasantasena, and goes home.

The eighth act opens with the appearance of our old friend, the Samvahaka, or joint-kneader, now transformed into a Buddhist, or medicant devotee, who enters the flower garden. The Rajah's brother, the abandoned Samst'hanaka, with his attendant, follows shortly after, and wantonly maltreats the poor Buddhist, who takes refuge from his blows, in the recesses of the garden. Presently the carriage of Samst'hanaka comes on, into which, as we have already seen, Vasantasena had inadvertently thrown herself. She is now, therefore, in the presence of her old pursuer, Samst'hanaka, whose passion for her she returns by the most decided aversion. Samst'hanaka approaches her with expressions of respect, but she spurns him with her foot. This treatment converts his passion into deadly hatred, and he resolves to destroy her. He first endeavors to persuade his tutor, and then the driver of the carriage, St'havaraka, to kill her; they both, however, refuse to execute the cruel act, and leave him. Stung by the continued scorn of the lady, he seizes and strangles her himself, and leaves her for dead. His tutor returning, and finding the cruel deed accomplished, forswears the friendship of Samst'hanaka, and flies to attach himself to the cause of Aryaka. Samst'hanaka, after covering the body of Vasantasena with leaves, goes off to court, to denounce Charudatta for having murdered her, in order to get possession of her wealth. The poor Buddhist, who has been concealed in the recesses of the garden, now comes in, and accidentally discovers the lady; who, not having been wholly suffocated, revives by his assistance, and is conducted by him to a neighboring convent.

The ninth act opens with the hall of justice, in which a court is held. Samst'hanaka appears and denounces Charudatta, for having murdered Vasantasena. While this trial is proceeding, Viraka, the captain of the watch above mentioned, enters the court, and lays his complaint against Chandanaka for the assault. From Viraka's complaint, it appears, that Vasantasena had been reported to be in the carriage of Charudatta, shortly before her assassination. As Charudatta had already, in the course of the trial, denied any knowledge, where

she was, the fact thus disclosed awakens suspicion against him. This suspicion is confirmed by another unfortunate occurrence. It will be recollected that Vasantasena had filled the earthen toy cart of Charudatta's child with jewels, to enable him to buy a golden one. The child's mother, however, refuses to permit the child to keep the jewels, and gives them to Maitreya to take back to Vasantasena. While on the way to perform this errand, Maitreya enters the court, and, having there learned the state of things, falls into a controversy, and finally into an affray, with the accuser of Charudatta, Samst'hanaka, the king's brother. In the personal struggle between them, Vasantasena's jewels drop from Maitreya's girdle. That lady's mother, who is present in court, as a witness, recognises the jewels as her daughter's. This last point of circumstantial evidence, is regarded by the court as proving Charudatta's guilt, and he is accordingly convicted. Being a Brahman he is not liable, by the Hindu law, to capital punishment. It is the duty, however, of the Rajah to pronounce the sentence, and he, in violation of the law, and of the sacred rights of the Brahmans, orders Charudatta to be impaled.

At the beginning of the tenth act we have the preparations for the execution of Charudatta, who is conducted towards the scaffold by two executioners, whose demeanor is very much in the style of that of the grave-diggers in Hamlet. The fatal procession passes under the windows of Samst'hanaka's palace. His servant, St'havaraka, the driver aforesaid, who had refused to kill Vasantasena, and who had seen his master do it, and is now confined by his master to prevent his appearing in court, hears the proclamation, announcing Charudatta's guilt and sentence. He determines to attempt to save him; and, unable to burst the door of his apartment, leaps from the window. He appears before the executioners, and the assembled crowd, declares the innocence of Charudatta, and the guilt of his master, Samst'hanaka. The crowd, with whom Charudatta is a favorite, joyfully believe his testimony; but Samst'hanaka succeeds in casting suspicion on his servant, as a runaway slave, and the preparations for the execution draw to a close. At this critical moment, the mendicant devotee comes forward, leading in the lady Vasantasena herself. The executioners refuse, of course, to take the life of Charudatta, for having murdered her. Thus restored to each other, Charudatta avows his purpose of making Vasantasena his wife, the

Hindu law imposing no obligation of monogamy. At the same moment Servillaka appears on the scene, and communicates the intelligence, that the political revolution is completed, the Rajah killed, and Aryaka seated on the throne in his place. Samst'hanaka, arrested by the incensed people, is now dragged forward, in chains, but, by the magnanimity of Charudatta, is again set at liberty. Another trouble now presents itself. The wife of Charudatta, supposing her husband executed, prepares to burn herself, as becomes an affectionate Hindu widow. Fortunately, however, her design is discovered; and her husband and the other *dramatis personæ*, repairing to the funeral pyre, which is already kindled, prevent the execution of her purpose. The happy wife is of course overjoyed at finding her husband alive, and restored by political changes to prosperity and power, and kindly embraces Vasantasena as a sister. The new king, Aryaka, requiting his obligations to Charudatta, raises Vasantasena to the rank of his kinswoman, and Servillaka, throwing a veil over her, elevates her from the place of a courtesan, to that of a Brahman's wife; and thus the piece ends.

Such is the story of *The Toy Cart*; and the reader who has attentively perused the foregoing sketch, will feel that it is full of incidents, judiciously combined. Almost every occurrence, however slight, is important in the business of the piece. The unities of time and place are neglected; but that of action is admirably preserved; and the translator justly remarks, that 'the connexion of the two plots is much better maintained, than in the play we usually refer to, as a happy specimen of such a combination, *The Spanish Friar*.'

It is, of course, unfair to look, in the translation, for a specimen of the style of the original. 'The music of the Sanscrit composition,' says Mr Wilson, 'must be ever inadequately represented by any other tongue.' We may add, that in no composition is it more completely out of the question, to convey an idea of style, in a translation, than in popular drama, painting scenes of real life, in a distant region, and at a remote period of time. *The Toy Cart* is unquestionably a performance of great antiquity. Many points of manners, touched upon in the course of the play, appear, from Mr Wilson's quotations of the Sanscrit commentary, to be now obscure, even to the Hindus. Whoever will ask himself the question, how Shakspeare would probably read, one or two thousand

years hence, literally translated into the language that may then be current in Calcutta, may judge of the disadvantage to which a Sanscrit play, written at least a thousand years ago, is read in a literal English version, at the present day.

It is time, however, to say something of the other specimen of the Hindu theatre, presented us by Mr Wilson. It is entitled *Vikrama and Urvashi*, or *The Hero and the Nymph*, and is comprised in five acts. This play is the production of the renowned bard of ancient India, Calidasa, one of whose dramas, 'Sacontalá,' as we have before observed, is already so well known to the world, in the version of Sir William Jones.\* At the time he published the translation of 'Sacontalá,' that play and the present were supposed to be the only dramatic productions of the 'Indian Shakespeare.' Mr Wilson, however, mentions the present drama, as one of the *three* attributed to Calidasa.

The common opinion makes Calidasa the chief of the nine poets who flourished at the court of Vicramaditya, whose death, fifty-six years before our Savior, makes an epoch in Indian history. This corresponds pretty nearly with the age of Lucretius at Rome, who died the day that Virgil was born, and to this coincidence there is a beautiful allusion, in Mr Grant's 'Poem on the Restoration of Learning in the East,' in the following lines ;—

'Hail, happy years ! when every lyre was strung,  
And every clime with mirth and music rung.  
While Asia's voice her Calidasa blest,  
Hark, kindred spirits answered from the West.  
There all his lofty notes Lucretius gave,  
And epic transports burst on Mincio's wave ;  
While roved the matin bee o'er sweetest flowers,  
And all Hymettus bloomed in Tibur's bowers.  
Oh, could some god have rent the veil away,  
And joined in one the masters of the lay !'

It ought to be observed, however, that Mr Bentley, who places the reign of Vicramaditya in the eleventh century, finds a poet Calidasa in the same period, and thus robs the bard of a full half of his two thousand years. We profess not a sufficient acquaintance with the subject to give an opinion of the

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\* 'Sacontalá' was republished in Boston, some years since, in a periodical work entitled *The Emerald*.

importance of these doubts, as to the antiquity of Hindu literature. It is somewhat strange that such a doubt should be started. The only man, into whose head a similar doubt ever entered with respect to classical literature, Father Hardouin, was immediately reputed, *quoad hoc*, insane. No one ever took the trouble to refute the suggestion. Mr Bentley's sentiments were offered to the world in the 'Asiatic Researches,'\* and rest partly on astronomical calculations. It is a matter of just surprise, that the series of the historical and other literature of the Hindus should not instantly present the means of refuting, or establishing, so important a suggestion.

Our limits do not allow us to introduce an analysis of the play of Calidasa, of which Mr Wilson has afforded us a translation. This we the less regret, as the play of 'Sacontalá' affords an adequate specimen of the poetry of its author. It is not, like *The Toy Cart*, a scene from real life, but is borrowed from the mythology of India; and its personages are partly derived from the divinities and demigods of the Hindu Pantheon. The commencement of the first act may serve as a sample of the performance, and particularly of the manner of the translator, Mr Wilson. The scene is laid on the top of the Himálaya mountains.

*'Enter in the Air a Troop of Apsarasas or Nymphs of Heaven.*

*Nymphs.* Help, help, if any friend be nigh,  
To aid the daughters of the sky.

*Enter Purúravas † in a heavenly car driven by his Charioteer.*

*Pur.* Suspend your cries, in me behold a friend,  
*Purúravas*, returning from the sphere  
Of the wide glancing sun; command my aid,  
And tell me what you dread.

*Rembhá.* A demon's violence.

*Pur.* What violence presumes the fiend to offer.

*Menaká.* Great king, it thus has chanced; we measured back  
Our steps from an assembly of the Gods  
Held in *Kuvera's* ‡ hall—before us stepped  
The graceful *Urvasi*, the Nymph whose charms  
Defeated *Indra's* stratagems, and shamed

\* *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. viii.

† *Purúravas* is a king of high descent, being sprung by his mother *Ilá* from the sun, and his father *Budha* from the moon, being the grandson of the latter, and great grandson of the former.

‡ The god of riches.



The loveliness of *Sri*\*—the brightest ornament  
Of heaven : when on our path the haughty *Dánava*  
*Kési*, the monarch of the golden city †  
Sprang fierce and bore the struggling nymph away.

*Pur.* Which path pursued the wretch ?

*Sahajanyá.* 'Tis yonder.

*Pur.* Banish your fears.

I go to rescue and restore your friend.

*Rembhá.* The act is worthy of your high descent.

*Pur.* Where wait you my return ?

*Rembhá.* Here—on this peak

The towering *Hemakúta*.‡

*Pur.* (*To the Charioteer.*) Bend our course

To yonder point, and urge the rapid steeds

To swiftest flight—'tis done ; before the car

Like vollied dust the scattering clouds divide ;

The whirling wheel deceives the dazzled eye,

And double round the axle seems to circle ;

The waving chowrie on the steed's broad brow

Points backward, motionless as in a picture ;

And backward streams the banner from the breeze

We meet—immovable.—We should outstrip

The flight of *Vainatéya*, § and must surely

O'ertake the ravisher. [*Exeunt.*

*Rembhá.* Now sisters on, and blithely seek

The golden mountain's glittering peak ;

Secure the king extracts the dart,

That rankles in each anxious heart.

*Menaká.* We need not fear ; his arm can quell

The mightiest of the sons of hell.

What makes he here—but aid to bring

From mortal realms to *Swerga's* king ;

And is not to his valor given

Command o'er all the hosts of heaven ? (*they proceed.*

*Rembhá.* Joy, sisters, joy, the king advances ;

High o'er yon ridgy rampart dances

The deer-emblazoned banner—See

The heavenly car rolls on ; 'tis he.

\* The wife of Vishnu, goddess of prosperity and beauty.

† *Hiranyapur*, is the name in the text.

‡ The Golden, or Snowy Peak.

§ Garura the son of Vinatá.